

**YOUNG
MAN,
YOU'RE
WANTED!**



**ANDOVER NEWTON
BULLETIN**

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In this number of the BULLETIN we depart from our customary practice in two respects: We publish material prepared in its entirety by one author; and we publish a booklet that we hope our readers will put into the hands of young men of their acquaintance rather than keep on their own library shelves.

While this issue is a departure from the BULLETIN norm, we make no apology for it. On the contrary, we consider the venture a real contribution to the church literature on recruitment for the ministry. It has been estimated that 15,000 Protestant pulpits are presently in need of trained ministers; that many hundreds of new ministers are needed each year to replace veterans of the Cross who die in harness or who retire due to age or infirmity; and that tens of thousands of new ministers will be needed to man the more than 70,000 new churches that will be built in the U. S. during the next ten years. Readers of the BULLETIN are among the church's most influential and effective recruiting agents, and we suspect that many of them will be grateful for a booklet they can put into the hands of that young man "who ought to be thinking about the ministry."

The author of "Young Man, You're Wanted" is a graduate of Andover Newton Theological School, served as a member of staff of his alma mater for many years, and has been minister since 1954 of the First Church in Newton, Newton Centre, Massachusetts. About the time this issue of the BULLETIN reaches its public, the Reverend Nathanael M. Guptill will be leaving his Newton Centre pulpit to undertake one of the most important offices in the gift of his denomination, that of Associate Minister and Secretary of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches.

We congratulate "Nat" on his appointment and the Congregational-Christian Churches on their choice, and wish him, and this booklet he has prepared for us, Godspeed!

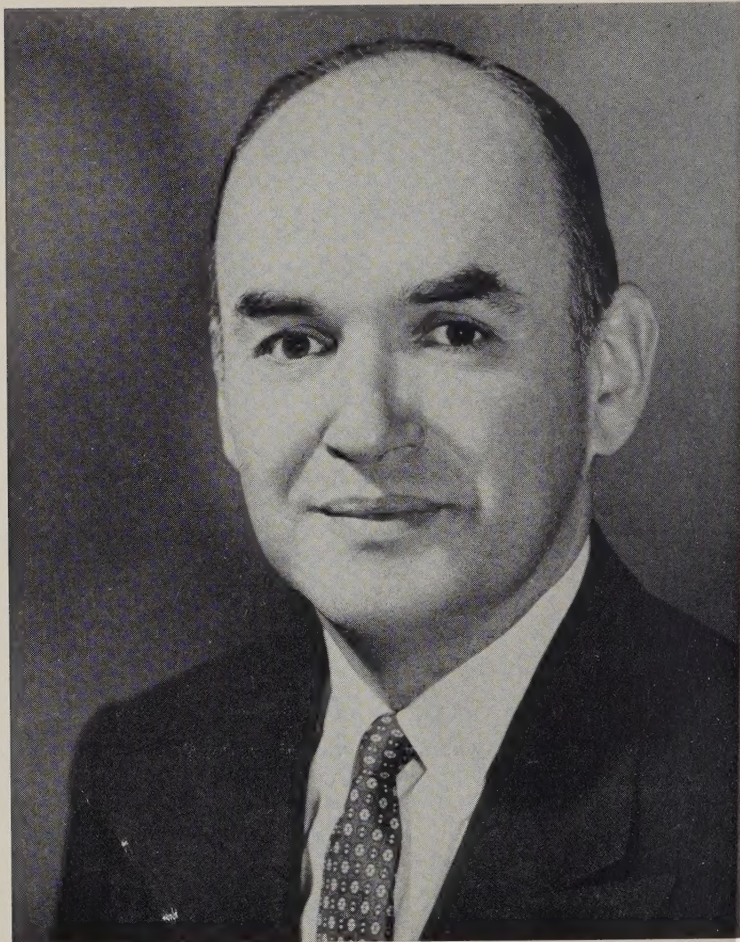
S. MACLEAN GILMOUR, *Editor*.

YOUNG MAN, YOU'RE WANTED

by

Nathanael M. Guptill

INTRODUCTION	I
I. "IT'S WHAT YOU BELIEVE THAT COUNTS!"	2
II. "HELP MY UNBELIEF!"	8
III. "THE FIELDS ARE WHITE THE LABORERS FEW."	20
IV. "HOW CAN I TELL WHETHER I'M 'CALLED' OR NOT?"	32
CONCLUSION	37



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INTRODUCTION

Young man, you're wanted!

You're wanted for the most important, most demanding, most rewarding enterprise of all time!

A thousand years ago Peter the Hermit wandered over Europe like a cyclone, preaching a crusade to free the Holy City from the hands of infidels. Hundreds of thousands of people from kings down to little children answered the call to bold adventure for the sake of Christ and the church. Their travels and their battles make a terrible and romantic chapter in the human story. Yet you're wanted for a greater enterprise than any medieval crusade. Two centuries ago Paul Revere set out for Lexington and Concord in the middle of the night to arouse the countryside to resist the encroachments of tyranny. The next day a little line of farmers, tradesmen, and craftsmen stood on Lexington Green and began a struggle that was to bring a new and great nation to its birth. But this enterprise for which you are wanted is greater than the birth of any nation.

Half a century ago posters all over the country displayed a picture of Uncle Sam. His eyes would find you wherever you went, and his finger pointed in your direction. Under the picture was the caption, "I want *you* — to save the world for democracy!" Of course, neither that war nor its bigger, bloodier brother twenty years later did make the world safe for democracy. And the enterprise for which you are wanted is far more important and surer of success.

You're especially wanted if you're a young fellow with a good mind and a gnawing at your heart to do something that really matters with people and for people. If you're fed up with a world that has nothing to offer young men but military service in ever ghastlier wars; if your heart aches for the suffering little people of this world and you'd like to do something about it; if you're discontented with studies whose only answers are "maybe" and long for a good, clear, ringing "yes" or "no"; if you have a "yen" to use the only life you have to strike a blow where it will count most; if you're tired of sitting in life's grandstand and want to get down into the arena and play; if the cynical scramble for dollars leaves you cold and the siren song of the utopians sounds a little off key; then this enterprise we're talking about is for you.

What is it? It's the Christian ministry.

Perhaps you never thought of the ministry in quite those terms. Unfortunately, there are also some ministers who haven't. Many young men, if they ever think of the ministry as an occupation, regard it as a rather respectable but dull life, unremunerative but safe, concerned chiefly with telling people that they ought not to do what they want to do. But it needn't be that way at all.

In fact, if you will read this pamphlet to the end, you'll see why the ministry is just what we say it is, the most important, the most demanding, the most rewarding job of all time.

I

"It's what you believe that counts!"

A group of young people were having their regular Sunday night discussion at the church. The topic for debate was: "Resolved: That the physician is more essential to the welfare of humanity than the parson."

Here let it be said that we take no position one way or the other on this issue. Some physicians do people a great deal more good than some parsons. Some parsons do people a great deal more good than some physicians. As we shall point out later, the right vocation for any given person is the one for which God has fitted him by inclination, talent, and need. And thank God that the world is not made up wholly of physicians and parsons — else who would tend the baby, fix the leak in the sink, and till the soil?

Therefore the discussion, like many such sessions, was academic. But the participants entered into it with great zeal on both sides. The time for the regular closing of the meeting came and went, but the argument continued unabated. Many arguments were advanced on both sides, with the tide of opinion swaying back and forth like the line of contact in battle. At 9:30 P.M. the issue was finally settled in favor of the affirmative by a telling argument which more than cancelled out the best the opposition could offer. The winning blow was the statement: "The doctor is more important because when he comes to see you it may be a matter of life and death, while the minister is only interested in what you believe." Everybody present, including the minister who was the advisor to the group, admitted that this established a winning case for the affirmative; so the meeting was adjourned, refreshments were served, and everybody went home.

But sleep came hard that night in the master bedroom of the parsonage. As this statement regarding "life and death" and "what you believe" kept going 'round and 'round in the minister's mind, it didn't sound quite as convincing as it had sounded in the clamor of debate. In fact, it didn't sound convincing at all. The more it was applied to various areas of life, the more it became apparent that, whatever the merits of the rest of the argument, on this point it was the parson and not the physician who had won. By the time that particular parson had gone to sleep, he was sure that *what you believe is more important than whether you live or die.*

Think this over very carefully before you continue reading. It is one of the most important facts of life, ranking in significance above

anything that can be said about atomic fission or boy meets girl, admittedly important as these subjects are.

A Man hung on a cross and died a miserable, painful, undeserved death. Yet, because he believed the right things, that death has become the most wonderful event of all time, the door of God's entrance into human history. Millions of others have lived in animal comfort to a ripe old age without ever doing anyone any particular good. Rufus Jones used to like to talk about Methuselah who "lived 969 years and then died." "Think of all the dishes that had to be washed for him in 969 years!" Dr. Jones would say, "and how do we know it was worth the trouble?"

To bring the matter even more graphically to your attention, ask yourself the question in all seriousness, "Would you rather be Robert Louis Stevenson and be dead, or Lucky Luciano and be alive?" Robert Louis Stevenson lived a short life, full of pain and disappointment. He went from one country to another, vainly seeking victory over the plague of tuberculosis which would not let him go. At the age of forty-four he was dead.

Lucky Luciano, on the other hand, is alive. He lives in a luxurious Italian villa. His power extends to the underworlds of several nations, including that in the United States. He has all the money a man can use, friends, companionship, love of a sort, and in all probability he will die of arteriosclerosis at the age of eighty-nine.

The principal difference between Stevenson and Luciano, aside from the fact that one is dead and other is alive, is that of belief. Stevenson believed in God, and the primary loyalty of his life was the service of God. Luciano believes in Luciano, and the primary loyalty of his life is the service of Luciano. Stevenson, because of his beliefs, wanted to give other people joy and hope by stories of adventure, lucid poems, and straightforward essays. Luciano, because of his beliefs, wants other people to do his bidding, inflate his ego, and if it seems necessary to him, die for his security or pleasure.

Even setting aside the Christian affirmation that Stevenson is not really dead, we submit that it would be better to be the happy, swash-buckling memory of *Treasure Island* in some youngster's mind than Lucky Luciano, with the weight of a thousand ruined young girls upon what is left of his conscience.

The most important difference between men is their basic beliefs, and we repeat, *What you believe is more important than whether you live or die!*

In fact, it is possible to die of the wrong belief.

E. Stanley Jones tells the story of a wealthy industrialist who went to the best doctor he could find. The man was suffering from indigestion, insomnia, heartburn, and a dozen other assorted ills. He was a "self-made man who worshipped his creator." He was a Big Shot, a Big Wheel, and a V.I.P. Everything about his life was going to his liking except his health. The physician examined him carefully and then called him into his office to receive the diagnosis. "Give it to me straight, Doc," said the patient. The Doctor replied, "You're dying of the wrong philosophy. That will be \$3,000, please." After hitting the ceiling, the patient finally paid his bill and went out to mend his ways and his health with beliefs more consistent with the will of God.

It is the beliefs of mankind that shape the course of history. Find out what men really believe today and you can prophesy the nature of things to come. The twentieth century's great struggles are merely the issue of beliefs born in the nineteenth century.

A man named Nietzsche wrote a book, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, about one called "Superman," who would be the next step in the evolution of the human species. This man, although clean and wise, would be strong and ruthless, taking control of his nation and the world by power so great as to defy whatever power is possessed by morality. The ideas of Nietzsche were warped and twisted into the political philosophy of National Socialism in Germany, and when people began to believe this philosophy Hitler was on the way.

A man named Marx wrote a book called *Das Kapital* in which he predicted the inevitable downfall of capitalism and the inevitable rise of socialism as the next step in political evolution. His ideas were likewise warped and twisted into a political philosophy, the philosophy of international communism, and nobody need be told in this day what happens when people believe his philosophy.

A man named Darwin made certain discoveries about the way in which life appears on this planet; so he wrote a book called *The Origin of Species*. In spite of the fact that this was a book about plant and animal life, it was seized upon by Herbert Spencer and others as proof of a strange doctrine called "the inevitability of progress," which was the false faith of much of America from 1900 until 1929 and contributed much to the fairyland fixation of our people during those years.

The real arena in which the destiny of humanity is being fought out is the mind of man. In this arena the institution of the democratic state is fighting for its life. In this arena the decision is being made as to whether man is to believe that he is the highest of the animals and nothing more, or verily a child of the Living God whose life has eternal significance.

Many have testified to the obvious fact that Christianity provides the "ideological" basis of democracy. The equality of all men before God, as all children are equal before their father, is the great major premise without which democracy just doesn't make sense. Unless people believe this, it is the rankest of folly to talk about "defending freedom" by military, political, or any other means. Without this faith in the hearts of the citizens, democracy is already dead, like the Christmas tree that may stay green a few weeks after being severed from its stump but whose doom is inevitable.

"But," you say, "of course everybody in America believes in the equality of all men!" We have all been told this throughout our public school education, until we think we really do believe it. There is a subtle danger here, because we have often fooled ourselves. None of us belongs to the KKK. We all recite the pledge of allegiance to the flag, ending "with liberty and justice for all." But often all that is needed is for somebody to ask the right question to unmask the hidden hypocrisy. "Would you sell your house to a Jew?" "Do you mind having your child play with Negroes?" "Would you like to have a Chinaman for a boss?"

In one of the few predominantly Protestant-Anglo-Saxon cities left in New England — back in the thirties — a newspaper photographer was looking for a human interest picture on a sizzling hot day in August. Down in one of the slum areas he found it. There were two little boys playing together. They were friends, as only two six year olds can be friends. From the point of view of the photographic artist, the thing about them that was distinctive was that one was Negro and the other was white. The white boy's ancestors had certainly come from somewhere in Scandinavia, for his eyes were blue and his hair was so blonde that it was almost white, while the little Negro was as black as a devil's food cake. The photographer asked the two boys if they would like an ice cream cone. They didn't need to be asked twice; so he posed them together holding a great big double-decker cone between them and attacking it with equally red tongues and equally white teeth from opposite directions. The picture was a "natural." It won a prize for the photographer as one of the best pictures of the year. But when it appeared in the daily paper in this northern city, where racial prejudice is supposed to be non-existent, the editor received more than four hundred letters of protest from Americans who are supposed to believe that all men are created equal.

There is a sequel to the story. Twelve years later these two boys, still good friends, were drafted into the military service of their country. They were taken from their homes to be placed in uniform to fight for the preservation of the "American way of life," which affirms

that all men are created equal. The kindly photographer who had kept in touch with them through the years took a picture of them reporting together for induction into the service. But when he suggested to his editor a reprint of the earlier photo with the later one, the editor decided against it, remembering the loud protests which had greeted the first picture more than a decade before.

This little story is only one small incident in a national pattern that includes everything from slighting little shoves on a bus to riots in Alabama and Tennessee and Arkansas. The best ammunition in the world for the propaganda mills of communism is this discrepancy between American preaching and American practice, especially at the point of belief in human equality.

We do not really believe in the democracy we seek to defend, and we shall not really believe in it, until the Christian gospel becomes the characteristic and dominant ideology of our people.

Sometimes the church itself is guilty of the same kind of hypocrisy, and this is added evidence of the great need for reinforcements in the pulpits of the land. For, how will the gospel's light shine for the nation when its lamps are smudged and fouled by impurities within?

This is a struggle that can be won.

If it is rightly said that the greatest power in human history is belief — as evidenced by the rise of such movements as Nazism, Communism, and such like — it can also be said that true belief is stronger than false belief. In the story of mankind it is a common occurrence for powers, weak but right, to defeat other powers, strong but wrong.

Our generation has seen an outstanding instance of this in the rise of the Indian Republic. Forty years ago one could have traveled to India and seen the British installations at New Delhi at the height of their splendor, the luxurious vice-regal palace, symbol of the empire on which the sun never would set, the bright uniforms and smart manoeuvres of the soldiers, British and "native," and the obvious sense of permanent proprietorship that pervaded the city. Then one could have traveled to a simple little hut in an out-of-the-way place where a little, bony, brown man sat on a rug praying in a small circle of his friends. There were no soldiers there, no great buildings, no complicated protocol, no class distinctions, none of the signs of what we moderns know as power. It would have seemed ridiculous to say that the true capital of India was not New Delhi's palace, but Mahatma Gandhi's little house. Yet, in truth, such was the case. "Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." It was the solid weight of the conviction that one people should not rule another without its consent, a true belief held by millions of Indians under Gandhi's in-

spiring leadership, that set India free — without armed revolt or other forms of violence.

That is why the battle for men's minds is so important. Unless it is won there is no use fighting any other battle. If it is won the ultimate outcome is assured. No demagogue has ever successfully enslaved a people who did not believe they should be slaves. The long history of the Hebrews is a good illustration of this. In every captivity of those people there were some who surrendered to the conqueror, but there were many who did not and who established the religion of their fathers and rose from slavery to positions of authority and influence in the midst of their captors. When the mind and spirit are enslaved, the slavery of the body is a formality. When the mind and spirit are free, the slavery of the body does not really matter, for it cannot last.

Some years ago the Sherwood Eddy American Seminar was gathered in London. The program for that particular morning was a discussion with the British historian, Arnold Toynbee. Professor Toynbee sat with the group of fifty Americans answering questions. The Korean war had just broken out, and the questions asked were questions like these: "Where are we going? What kind of future is there for mankind? What kind of world will there be fifty years from now?" No recording of Dr. Toynbee's answers was made, but this is the gist of his reply:

Of course, I don't know what kind of a world we are going to have when this molten present is cast in the mold of the future, but I know what is going to make the world of tomorrow. It all depends on what men believe. Great militarists change the course of history for a few decades. Great minds may determine it for a century or so. But it is the great spirits, the great believers, who in the long run set the course of history. Right now man is making up his mind about what he believes. He may decide that he believes in himself, as many Americans do — in which case we shall have chaos. He may decide that he believes in collective humanity, as many Russians do — in which case we shall have slavery. He may decide that he believes in God, the Father of Jesus Christ, in which case the wildest dreams of the race will fall far short of the actual world we can have in A.D. 2000.

It's what you believe that counts.

You're wanted — to help the world find the belief that can save it.

II

"Help my unbelief!"

We hear you. Here's what you're saying: "Sure, maybe you're right that all these things depend on what we believe. Maybe it's so that democracy, the family, and human dignity are under sentence of death without religion. But there's more to it than that. I can't say, 'OK, I have to believe in the Christian God, so I do believe.' I have to believe what I think is true, not just what I wish were true. I don't know whether I believe in God or not. And how about immortality and the virgin birth and Jonah and the whale and all that? Don't you have to believe that to be a Christian? I'd rather make the best of a bad world than just try to kid myself. How do I know it isn't you Christians who have the 'fairyland fixation'?"

When we hear you say that we take off our hats. We know you're honest, that you have a reverence for the truth. And that is the first sign of real maturity. We want you to be men, not boys, where respect for reality is concerned.

Before we go any farther, let's answer the last question you asked, "How do we know it isn't the Christians who have the fairyland fixation?" We have denounced the kind of modern thinking that tries to insulate itself from reality by making believe that disagreeable facts just aren't facts — the kind of ostrich attitude that clings to the childish notion that life is a comedy in which "everybody lives happily ever after."

You are right to challenge us by reminding us that Christians believe a lot of things that seem quite unreal to other people. After all, isn't it the Christians who are the loudest in proclaiming that life does not end with death? Karl Marx was very sure that, far from being a true picture of reality, Christian doctrine was a figment of lies and superstition. He called religion "the opiate of the people." The down-trodden workers couldn't afford real opium to take their minds off their misery, so their rulers gave them religion to keep them happy and docile. This is the communist line to this day on religion, and there is enough support for it in the policies of some national and totalitarian churches that it cannot be dismissed without a hearing.

Nevertheless, if the hearing is fair, Christianity will come through with flying colors.

"Escape" philosophies always render their believers temporarily immune to disagreeable reality. Like an anaesthetic, these ideas shut out the pain and sorrow of the world. The hedonist who believes that

pleasure is the supreme good forgets that there are millions of hungry, cold people in the world, and therefore is exempt from the urge to help them. Believers in fairyland are usually self-centered people because, living in their own invented world, they have little sympathy for those who live in the real world. To understand any escape doctrine there is a key question: "What's in it for the believer?" When we know the answer to that question, we understand the origin of the belief.

But Christianity does not fit this pattern. The Christian (if he is really that and not traveling under false colors) is supremely concerned with the victims of the world's injustice. If we ask "What's in it for the Christian?" the answer for Stephen is death by stoning; for Peter, crucifixion head down; for missionaries, years spent in strange countries among unfriendly and suspicious people, far from comfort and convenience; for ordinary folk, self-denial and obedience to a code of rectitude that the world adjudges "queer." True, the Christian believes in immortality, and that might be considered a reward, except for the fact that most non-Christians would rather die than live forever under the Christian code of values. The Christian, far from insulating himself from the world, takes the troubles of the world as his troubles and gives his life wholeheartedly in helping those less fortunate than himself.

Again, "escape" philosophies, because they are untrue and prevent people from facing reality, never have a positive effect on the history of the world. Hedonism, to refer again to the most popular of such ideologies, has had the effect of contributing to the downfall of most civilizations that have died. But no "world-denying" ideology has significantly assisted the uplift of humanity from beasthood to godhood.

Christianity, on the other hand, has been the most tremendous force for human betterment in the past two thousand years. Western civilization, now on trial, has been called "Christian" civilization because the ideals and values it has avowed as its ideals and values have been received almost in their entirety from Christianity. Our legal code, our desire for education, our concern for the value of human life (involving the rise in the status of women, the admission of the responsibility of society to care for the old, the weak, and the infirm, and our political forms), all have had their genesis in the movement of which Jesus Christ is the living center.

Therefore, whatever else can be said in criticism of Christianity, it cannot be said that the religion of Jesus is a world-denying "escape from reality." In fact, this is the principal mark that distinguishes Christianity from other Oriental religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, which give up this world as hopeless. Christianity is not the opiate of the people because, unlike opium, which eases pain, Chris-

tianity makes the believer vulnerable to the pains of the human race, and, unlike opium, which creates a world of its own apart from reality, Christianity opens people's eyes to a greater understanding and appreciation of reality as it is. Unlike "escape" philosophies, which abandon the world as none of their concern, Christianity is concerned with every creature of God.

"All right," we hope you are saying now, "so Christianity isn't a part of the fairyland fixation. But you haven't shown us yet that it's a part of reality either." That is now what we are going to try to do.

To begin with, we must recognize that there are basically two approaches to knowledge. First, there is the so-called "scientific method," the method by which so many wonderful things have been discovered in our lifetime and that of our parents. This method is a chain of induction and deduction by which data are collected, trial hypotheses are set up on the basis of the data, and then these hypotheses are tested by other data. It is a method that seeks to be utterly "objective," being concerned with facts, "cold facts" as they are called, and not interested at all in preconceived notions, personal feelings (save as these are regarded in psychology as data), or abstract speculations about meanings and values. This is a very satisfying approach to knowledge, for the things we find out this way can be readily proven to other people and can be believed with little or no risk of subsequent contradiction.

But there is another kind of knowledge, another kind of belief, one that comes about immediately, intuitively, subjectively, sometimes assisted by reason, but sometimes unrelated to rational thought. For example, a young man goes from college for a holiday week-end with his roommate's family in a strange city. He is sitting in the living room awaiting the call to supper when, suddenly, in comes his roommate's sister, whom he has not met before. Immediately several ideas become embedded in his mind with a certitude akin to absolute knowledge. He is sure that this young lady is the most beautiful creature fashioned by the Most High since Eve; he is positive that some kind Fate has arranged this meeting as the prelude to a romance that will make the relationship between Romeo and Juliet seem like a nodding acquaintance by comparison; and he is positive that she must feel the same way about him. At that moment this knowledge is far more satisfying than the knowledge that two plus two equals four. But there are obvious perils in coming to conclusions of this sort in this way. Perhaps when she opens her mouth she will reveal rusty bridgework and the sharp tongue of a shrew. Maybe she is already engaged to Egbert Van Milyonboks down the street. On the other hand, it may be that the guiding beliefs of two years of courtship and fifty years of happy marriage are established at that moment in his mind, and that at the end these beliefs are more firmly held than at the beginning.

The obvious course in such cases is for the young man to enjoy the immediate beliefs as they come to him, test them by the light of such reason as he can bring to bear in such a fevered condition, and "when his head and heart agree," act accordingly. It is obvious that, in such a situation, both the head and the heart have something to say about the matter; that is, it is obvious to anybody who has not become imprisoned within the cage of the false notion that the scientific method is the only doorway by which valid knowledge can enter the mind.

There is in our day a popular idea that emotions are vestigial remnants of the dark ages which, since they cannot be eliminated altogether, should be ignored as completely as possible. In our desire to be objective we have forgotten that we are, at least to ourselves, not objects but subjects, and therefore it might be well for us to cultivate a bit of subjectivity if we are to live at all.

The scientific method is an approach to knowledge which, in its proper field, has been a great boon to mankind, but as a philosophy of life it is a boat without oars. Actually, in the individual lifetime there are far more decisions in vital matters that have to be made on the basis of a leap of faith, only partially supported by reason, than can be made in the clear white light of demonstrable knowledge. That is the way life is. If we only consider factual, rational knowledge, all the truly great choices we make are on the basis of insufficient evidence. The course we take in school, the girl we marry, the career upon which we embark, the way we vote as citizens, the decisions we make about the way we use our money — all these choices are fraught with great opportunity and great peril. And happy is the man who has a set of convictions undergirding his life that make these choices clear and reasonable and consistent.

Many who will immediately recognize that what we have said above is true will be surprised to hear that the commitment to religious faith is one of these necessary life choices. In fact, it is the most important choice of all. A man's religion is his guiding star, and not to choose is to go through life without a guiding star. A man's religion is his real life insurance, and not to choose a religion is to go through life without any "invisible means of support." A man's religion is the engine and the rudder of the ship of his life, and not to choose is to go through life as a drifting derelict, subject to all the winds and currents of heredity and environment rather than master of them.

We are ignorant; yet by the necessity of life we must know. Therefore, it behooves us to have all the windows of our minds open — those that open on the facts of creation; those that open inwardly into the deep recesses of our own being where reside our feelings, desires, as-

pirations, and hopes; and those that open into the lives of other men who have gone before us to show the way. Life is not a safe, charted course whose end we see from the beginning. Life is either a venture in which we stake our all on something greater and more important than self, or it is a "tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

O world, thou choosest not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, and had no chart,
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies;
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art.
Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
That lights the pathway but one step ahead
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine.

(*Santayana*)

Even the great advances in the fields of science have been ventures of faith. Columbus was not sure his men were wrong when they predicted that the Santa Maria would sail off the edge of the flat earth. But he *believed* they were wrong and he trusted his "soul's invincible surmise." Pasteur began his great career of discovery with a leap of faith that recently discovered microscopic organisms had something essential to do with many human diseases. In spite of ridicule he held to his "soul's invincible surmise" until it became more than a guess, and every reputable scientist in the world admitted its truth. In the complicated chain of logic that led Einstein to his theory of relativity there were many propositions which could not be proven, but were assumed on faith because "they ought to be so."

St. Paul spoke truly, not only of Christians but of everybody, when he said, "We live by faith and not by sight!" And the decisions we make and the courses we follow because of faith are the ones that make human life truly great. It is the unproven beliefs on which a man bets his life, even against odds, that determine not only the course, but also the worth of his life. Andrew Jackson's faith in his Rachel; Lincoln's belief in the Union; Woodrow Wilson's faith in the League of Nations (even though it seemed to fail); George Washington Carver's faith in the principle that there was a use in God's economy for everything, even the lowly peanut — these are only a few of the history-

making commitments in faith that have contributed to our country's greatness.

The key to understanding what it means to be Christian is found in one of the parting words of Jesus to his disciples. They were gathered together the night he was to be betrayed, and he said to them, "I go to prepare a place for you . . . and you know the way where I am going." We can imagine the disciples nodding at this point, as if they did know just what Jesus was talking about. But Thomas was the apostle with the healthy curiosity. He didn't know and, unlike his fellows, he wasn't willing to let the matter pass without finding out. Thomas said, "Lord, we don't know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Jesus then gave him the answer that is the perfect answer to all questions about what it means to be a Christian: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." This short statement is a pattern of Christian experience as it begins, as it is understood, and as it works to produce that kind of life in the world that God made the world to produce. Wherever in the long course of Christian history we pick out a Christian life or a Christian institution, we see this principle in action.

For instance, let us consider the life of Simon Peter. This big, hearty fisherman was working by the Sea of Galilee one day when Jesus came to him and said, "Follow me." We are told that "straight-way" Simon left his nets and followed the Master. It is certain that, when he followed Jesus that day, he had in his mind ideas about him that were extremely vague. Jesus knew this, and accepted Peter's discipleship in the full knowledge that his disciples had little understanding of what he was doing. At this time Jesus certainly did not ask Simon if he believed in the Trinity, or the doctrine of the Atonement, or the infallibility of the Scriptures, or the Incarnation, or any other Christian doctrine. Perhaps he had seen the Nazarene Rabbi moving among the crowds in Capernaum, or touching the sick by the way, or talking to the multitudes in the country. But surely he knew little except that here was a man who, because of some mysterious radiance in his personality, could not be denied when he called. Simon followed Jesus as a way — a good way whose destination was shrouded in mystery. He followed Jesus because he loved him and believed in him.

It was many hot and weary months later that Simon became known, not any more as Simon, but as "Peter, the rock." As he followed Jesus, the way, and lived with him day and night, it became increasingly apparent to him that ordinary human concepts did not apply to this Master of his. Over and over in his mind he would reconsider the old accounts in Scripture, striving to understand this man whom he loved and followed but did not know. Then, in a flash of inspiration, the answer came to him. Jesus had halted his little com-

pany in the midst of a journey for a rest and conversation. "Who do people say I am?" he asked them. "Oh, some say you're John the Baptist, or Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets risen from the dead" was the reply. "Who do you say I am?" he quickly rejoined. Peter fell on his knees as the light dawned: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" He who had been for the fisherman the way of life that he followed had now become not only the way but also the truth. By walking the way faithfully he had been enabled to discover the truth, and from now on Jesus as way and Jesus as truth, by contributing one to the other, would together enrich and ennoble and finally perfect Peter's life.

After this moment of revelation Peter's relationship to Jesus had a new dimension, a deeper significance. Before it he would say, in times of doubt and indecision, "I love him. I will follow him, right or wrong." After it he would say, "He is the Christ. What does this event mean in the light of that truth?" From this time forward discipleship would reveal more and more facets to the central truth of Jesus' Christhood, and from this time forward the knowledge of the truth that he was the Christ would give power and significance and light to discipleship. And, together, the following and the knowing made for Peter a life that, in spite of the back-slidings due to human frailty, was to be a fulfillment of what God made him to be, a life for which we, two thousand years later, may still be thankful. Jesus, having been the way and the truth, now became Peter's life.

This experience of Peter's was also the experience of the early church. After Jesus' earthly ministry the question arose, "What is to be left of this fellowship?" The apostles were surrounded by a motley company of men and women from many walks of life who had many and varied ideas about the meaning of their common experience. They gathered together to be instructed by those who had known Jesus best and to have their faith in him strengthened by fellowship one with another. They knew that, because of the remarkable events that surrounded Jesus' departure, God had something peculiar to do with him and with them, but they were not sure just what that something was. Just as Simon had left his nets and set out after the Master, not knowing just why or where this way would end, but knowing that he loved Jesus and that that was enough, so the members of the early church, because they had known this same Jesus, or because they had seen him after his crucifixion, or because of the warmth and intimacy of the fellowship they had together, set out to be his people, not knowing just where the way would lead them. They were known in those days as "Comrades of the Way," both to each other and to strangers. Their binding loyalty was a common love of Jesus and a common faith that

somehow it would be made clear why they walked together and where they were going.

Then, just as by following the way Peter was enabled to apprehend the truth, the early church likewise began to get some answers to its questions. The first great lesson came on the day of Pentecost, when they all received the Holy Spirit and knew beyond the shadow of a doubt that, even though Jesus was not with them in the flesh, nevertheless they were not deserted by God, for he was present with them to inspire, instruct, and empower. Then, gradually, they began to discover new ideas about Jesus and about their mission as his followers. The memorial supper they shared became a sacrament and an act of worship. Out of their experience arose the great articles of faith until, at the end of the first century, there was a definite body of doctrine that could be imparted to newcomers to the fellowship before they received baptism. Jesus, who had been the way, now became the truth for his church, and from that time forward there has never been a time when Christian experience has not been the result of the intermingling of the influence of Jesus himself as an active agent in life and the beliefs about him which have been defended by his church through the ages. The Christian life, for an individual or for an institution, is what happens when Jesus is accepted as the way and the truth. Whenever and wherever wills are bent to follow him and minds are opened to hear him, the inevitable result is Christianity with all its precious by-products of free human society.

This pattern of Christian experience has not changed in our day. In the twentieth century Jesus is still the way and the truth and the life. Although Christianity has an ideology, it seldom begins in a life as an ideology. Although Christianity has teachings about the nature of God, man, and the universe, it does not usually begin with these, for teachings without the living presence of Christ are not Christianity. In your life and mine the Christian beginning is the commitment of the self to follow Jesus as the way. Then, in following him as the way, we discover Him as the truth, and finally enter into his life.

It is a common assertion by churchmen that nobody ought to make a commitment to follow Christ or join his church until he knows just what he is doing. It is my conviction that, if this rule were laid down and followed, nobody ever would decide to follow Christ or join the church. It is like saying that nobody ever should get married or embark on a career until he knows just what he is doing. It is advisable for anybody to make a serious inquiry before taking either of these steps, but after we have found out all we can about them, they are still leaps of faith whose consequences cannot be predicted with any real confidence.

Jesus walks among us today, as he walked by the Sea of Galilee long ago, and says, "Follow me." The motives of those who answer his call are as clouded and various as those of Simon and Andrew and James and John, who left their nets in the first century to go after him. It may be that we "join the church" along with the other members of our Sunday School class with no higher motive than to escape being conspicuous. Perhaps as members of the armed services we ask the chaplain to baptize us before we go into battle because something inside tells us we don't want to die without first having taken that step. Perhaps as college students groping for the answers to life's questions we become discontented with the answers that all the others have to offer and say, "All right, Jesus, I'll give you a try." Perhaps we wish to marry a Christian girl and, when she insists that her home is going to be a Christian one, we say, "If it means so much to you, maybe there is something in it." Perhaps, looking into the crib where lies his baby, there comes to the new father a sense of responsibility that he never felt before, and he feels a need for help in undertaking the duties of parenthood. Every day in such circumstances some answer the call of Christ. And every day some of them, like the multitudes in Galilee, find that Christianity is difficult and, "turning away, follow Him no more."

But, wonder of wonders, there are many who, after decisions like these, do not turn away, but keep on like Simon, until they like him are bound to confess, "Thou art the Christ!" The decision to follow Jesus as the way opens a door into the soul by which he can enter after a while as the truth. The youngster who joined the church in the pastor's class goes away to college or to war and finds in a moment of crisis that the Christ he knew as a child will have his life as a man. The soldier baptized before battle discovers that strangely enough he is not alone in his foxhole or in his single-seat fighter, and he comes back with a great urge to tell others about the Christ he found in the midst of the mud and the peril. The young husband and father finds in the beauty of his wife and child the source of a spiritual grace not of this world. The young man who unites with the church to "try and see" discovers in the society of God's people the greatest reality of all.

Like Peter, the twentieth century follower of the way finds that, the longer he follows, the more he becomes aware of Jesus as the truth. This is not the kind of truth that we discover by reading books on mathematics — although in the newer physics of our generation there is basis for many religious affirmations. But this is the kind of knowledge that comes by loving a great and good friend year after year; the kind that grows out of serving a high and noble cause; the kind of knowledge that not only frees the soul from ignorance, but also sets

it free from fear and "way-outlessness." The more we learn of the actual life of Jesus of Nazareth and the lives of those in whose spirits he has lived for two thousand years, the more we are convinced that the common criteria of mortal manhood do not apply to him. As we keep our minds open and listen to the historic doctrines of the church, one by one they seem to make sense until, by trying out truth, we become more and more convinced that this way is indeed God's way for us. As we live in the fellowship of the church, fighting against the evil that attacks it from within and from without, contributing our share to the good it seeks to do, we find in the lives of those who walk with us a current testimony to truths more significant and richer in actual results than other truths more easily proven. Some of us in this pilgrimage will arrive at convictions which might be termed "orthodox," opinions which have been the doctrines of the ages. Some of us will never so arrive, but will always maintain, along with our love for Christ himself, a few doubts as to some of the ideas commonly held about him. But as long as we maintain the basic commitment, growing stronger year by year to follow Jesus as the way and the truth, we shall find in him a life more abundant than any other open to us. Our basic commitment will be that of Richard Watson Gilder:

If Jesus Christ is a man — and only a man — I say
That of all mankind I cleave to Him and to Him will I cleave
always.
If Jesus Christ is a god — and the only God — I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell, the earth, the sea
and the air.

The invitation to strike out in faith on this venture is the invitation of God to his world in every generation. Those who accept it and are faithful find the promise true that Jesus is indeed "the way, and the truth, and the life."

The demand which Jesus of Nazareth makes upon you and upon every man is not primarily the demand of an idea but the demand of a Person, of himself as God's agent in history.

This is an essential notion to understand, because this is the difference between Jesus and all the other claimants upon your allegiance. Communism is a philosophy, an ideology whose authority is based on the alleged truth of certain basic ideas about history and economics. National Socialism was a movement based on a philosophy whose authority was the alleged truth of the doctrine of the superman and the super race. Even American democracy is a movement based on a philosophy whose basic ideas are set forth in the Declaration of Independence. You can believe that Joseph Stalin was a brutal tyrant and still be a communist, if you espouse the ideas of communism. You can

believe the same about Hitler and still be a fascist, if you espouse the ideas of fascism. You can be a believer in democracy, in spite of the defects in the leadership of free countries.

The reverse is true when we confront the claims of Jesus. He first demands that you believe, not the ideas about which he talks, but in him as the epitome of humanity at its best. This is his strength. There is no basic idea of Christianity that it is not easy to doubt. Many moderns have lost faith in immortality, in the authority of the Scriptures, in the Incarnation, and in many others of the propositions of the gospel, even to the idea of the Fatherhood of God. But it is virtually impossible for an honest and open-minded man to disbelieve in Jesus. Even agnostic and atheistic historians, when they make their lists of the great men of history, invariably place his name at the top of the list. Whatever may be the thought forms into which we mold our ideas about him, we are bound to confess that in him we see the most sublime event of the whole human story. Whatever else he is, he is at least sincere, profoundly aware of spiritual reality, utterly unselfish, devastatingly powerful in the influence he wielded, completely worthy of the allegiance of all men.

So, when this matter of belief is discussed, be sure you ask the right questions. It is not, "How can I believe that I can live forever?" That is a question that comes later. Nor is it, "How can I believe that a man could be the Son of God?" That, too, is like asking the teacher of first grade arithmetic on the first day of school, "How do I know that the square of the hypotenuse of a right angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides?" The first demand of Jesus is not "Believe in the Incarnation," but "Follow me." And our first question is, "Do I believe in Jesus as one worthy of my complete allegiance?"

When some Pharisees were questioning Jesus' authority, he said, in effect, "If you question my authority, try out what I say, and when you have tried it out you will know whether the things I say are mine, or God's who sent me."

To a scientific age this should be an appealing proposition. If we read history with open eyes and study our present age with open minds, we know that "all we hold dear" — democracy, the family, the very basic concepts of human dignity, and the worthwhileness of human life — depends upon the belief in and the practice of Christianity. Jesus comes to us, as he did to Simon and Andrew by the lake, and says, "Follow me." We say, "You're the kind of man I can believe in, but the things you talk about, eternal life, God's Kingdom, and the rest, sound strange to me. I don't know whether I believe in them or not." He replies to us, "I've never made doctrine a test of discipleship. All

I ask is that you follow me, and after a while these other things will become clearer than they are now."

This proposition is better than the famous "money back guarantee." It's expensive, to be sure, because it costs you your life. But remember, it isn't *your* life, anyhow, and you've got to give it to something or someone in due time. And the guarantee in this undertaking is that, by giving up your old life, you get back a better one, one that won't wear out. Not only for you, but for the whole human race, Jesus wants to be the way and the truth and the life. It was Chesterton who said, "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting! It has been found difficult and not tried."

Are you willing to try this out? Will you give Christianity a test run in your life? If you're willing, then here are some of the things you can do about it.

Get a copy of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament and read it — a little every day. A few minutes before you go to sleep will be a good time — work it into your schedule. Don't worry about the miracle stories if they bother you. You can come back to them later. Just try to remember that these things were written a long time ago, but that people then were much the same as we are now. Above all, try to get acquainted with Jesus again, with the way he had with people and the things he had to say about living. Let the Book talk to you until it has something to say for today.

See your minister or college pastor or service chaplain and tell him about this test run you're making. Let him give you something to do in the church, in the Student Christian Movement, or in the chapel, that will get you acquainted with other fellows who are in the same boat with you.

If possible, attend some conferences with other people who are looking for Christian answers. There are many of them, and they will give you a good chance to get to know some folk who are taking Jesus seriously.

Get into the habit of praying. Perhaps a little book like Fosdick's *The Meaning of Prayer* might help at this point. And back your prayers with appropriate action!

Above all, don't give up. Make this test run for at least six months. A great deal depends on it, and it ought to be worth that much time. Before that time has passed we believe you'll be well started on the way, with a few new glimmerings of the truth beginning to appear each month.

You're wanted — to take a gamble that, when really tried, has never failed.

III

"The fields are white the laborers . . . few"

"But the ministry is a job for tea drinkers and hand shakers. I want something that will appeal to a man!"

The only answer to this recurring remark is, "Brother, you don't know what you're talking about."

No vocation in the world is so poorly understood by those outside it as the Christian ministry. What minister has not talked to some promising youngster about the possibility of his attending seminary only to have him say, "I just couldn't take a job that is as dull as a minister's." Hard, it is. Disappointing it is at times. Occasionally it may involve hardship and sorrow almost too great to bear. But dull? Never!

About the pioneer missionaries of the nineteenth century somebody has said, "They would probably have been pirates if they hadn't been missionaries, because they were that kind of people." The saga of the Southwest Pacific in the past one hundred and twenty-five years would put a good many novels to shame for sheer excitement. The missionaries went there, arriving on an island inhabited by dirty, naked, head-hunters, with no weapons but a book and a determination born of faith. The first ones died at an early age. Some of them were eaten by cannibals. More were murdered. Many died of diseases. But more came to take their places, until there was established on that great expanse of ocean a chain of little Christian communities where lawlessness and immorality were virtually unknown and real happiness was more prevalent than in most American towns. During World War II, Henry P. Van Dusen wrote a little book entitled *They Found the Church There* in which he told the wonderful tale of the tremendous debt owed these "fuzzy wuzzy" people by literally thousands of American servicemen whose lives they had saved. A marine put it succinctly in a letter to his mother: "Today, because of missionaries, I was fed instead of eaten."

Many have read the book, *Burma Surgeon*, which tells how Gordon Seagrave took a pile of surgical instruments out of Johns Hopkins waste baskets and packed them on a boat bound for Burma, there to establish in an old, ramshackle, bloodstained building a hospital that brought healing and hope to a whole people. If the Christian commitment should turn some young scientist towards the kind of life Gordon Seagrave has lived, we should not be disappointed at having lost a candidate for the ministry.

The ugly race problem, that great peril packed with more dynamite than any other issue that faces mankind today, is nowhere more dangerous than in the United States. The work of the men and women of the American Missionary Association in taking learning and opportunity to the neglected people of our Southland is one of the brightest chapters in that dark story. And the struggle for justice and decency still goes on.

But this is not a book about Christian vocations in general; it is about the regular parish ministry. We don't need another book about missions. Mission Board leaders tell us that if there were enough money to send them, there would be plenty of recruits for the toughest assignments in the world. Young people thirst for a job that is vital, significant, and difficult, and when these jobs are made available they don't go begging for want of applicants. The trouble today is that, due to inflation, all regular Protestant mission boards must cut their programs to fit available resources. Now, when the Christian movement faces its greatest opportunity, it must operate at half speed for lack of the necessary funds. And why? Because there are not enough ministers in the regular churches of the land, where these sinews of peace must come from, who have what it takes to arouse the requisite concern and support for missions among lay people.

We have written in general terms about the call to Christian discipleship, and it is undoubtedly true that the Protestant Church needs people in every walk of life. It is also true that any job that renders a useful service to mankind can be, and often is, a Christian vocation. We shall have more to say about this in the final chapter.

Still, this is a book about the parish ministry and, as we said at the beginning, the ministry is "the most important, the most demanding, the most rewarding job of all time." We are prepared to support this statement.

In an army the man who is held in lowest regard, yet on whom most depends, is the second lieutenant. Many are the cartoons ridiculing his egotism, his incompetence, his lack of real importance. But when battle comes, his job is the one on which victory depends. He must furnish leadership, not in the comfort of a rear echelon billet, but with the bullets whistling past his head. He is "expendable," and he knows it. If he flinches, usually his men flinch, too. If he shows courage, his men follow him to hell and back. When the chips are down, he is likely to be decorated or killed.

The second lieutenant of the church is the parish minister (rector if he is Episcopalian, pastor if Lutheran.) He may be a stuffed shirt, as second lieutenants are reputed to be, and sometimes are. He is fair

game to the cartoonist and to the gunner's mate in the Ladies Aid. His job is viewed as anything from that of a professional killjoy to that of a professional loafer. Yet, when he knows his job and does it rightly, he is that man in town whose presence is most desired and whose departure causes greatest sorrow. He is not subject to the physical dangers of his army counterpart (unless he happens to be an army padre), but the spiritual perils he confronts and the personal problems he bears in addition to his own are such as might make an actual battle seem quite comfortable by comparison. And, as victory or defeat in battle depends on the calibre of the second lieutenant, so the cause of the church and her people rests in the hands of the minister.

In the center of an American town there was the meetinghouse of a church. Weeds grew high in the churchyard, and wind blew unhindered through the broken window panes of the building. A dozen people would gather on Sunday for dull worship under the leadership of a "supply." This town of four thousand people was a demoralized one. Its community spirit was practically non-existent. The youngsters "hung out" at the "joints" in the evening, and not a few were in trouble most of the time. Old people and those in distress were lonely, and strangers regarded the town as a place to leave as soon as possible.

Then the dozen or so people who were interested in the church made a decision that had results far beyond their expectation. To save themselves the trouble of booking a new "supply" to preach each Sunday, they arranged to have a theological student from a nearby seminary become their pastor at a salary equivalent to the meager allotment they had paid the "supply." This student had had little experience, but he loved people dearly, felt hurt when they were hurt, shared their happiness, and had a conviction that Jesus Christ had something that needed to be said to the people of the town.

Three years later the student is about to leave the town for his first fulltime charge. But this church will not call another student to take his place, for they now need a fully qualified minister to occupy the recently renovated parsonage. The meetinghouse glistens with a shiny coat of paint. The churchyard is green and neatly trimmed. The old basement, which used to contain nothing but the rusty heater, is now a parish hall where suppers, entertainments, and socials are held during the week and where on Sunday all available space is crowded with church school children. But the change in the community is more startling than the change in the meetinghouse. The youngsters no longer gather at the "joints" just to hang around. Instead, they are working after school to clear and level a new playground on a vacant lot in a part of town where children play in the streets. Community leaders have begun a movement for a new and modern schoolhouse

to take the place of one that had been outgrown. The old and the lonely know what it is to be remembered by many unpublicized kindnesses. And strangers to the town discover it is difficult there to find a vacant house, for now the town is a place where new families wish to settle.

Perhaps you think the above story is too "pat" to be true. It *is* true, nevertheless, and dozens of similar stories could be told, not only about towns, but about cities as well, where ministers young and old have gone — not just ordinary ministers, to be sure, but ministers with better than average ability and with a willingness to spend their time and talents in the service of their people.

Three things the minister must do well if he is to earn his salary: He must be a preacher, a parish administrator, *and* a pastor. These three functions are not stated in order of their importance, for they are equally essential. It is a fact that men who excel in all three of these departments are rare indeed, and fortunate is the church that can find such a man. But every minister, even though his talents are localized in but one of these fields, must be able to perform adequately in all of them, or his church will suffer. (Few churches are wealthy enough to afford several specialists rather than one general practitioner.) The job of the minister is like an equilateral triangle. When any side is neglected, the whole is out of shape. A minister may be interested in a hundred things in addition to these three. He may be a specialist in Christian education, or evangelism, or social justice. He may be a community leader, a member of the Little Theatre, a rider of hobbies. But unless his three primary functions are fulfilled, he is not doing his job.

Under the heading of the first task, that of the preacher, will fall all the various elements of worship, the arrangement of liturgy, the ability to lead in prayer, and the preparation and delivery of sermons that will keep people awake and feed their immortal souls. Someone has aptly said that the function of the preacher is to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

To perform this task, several attributes are desirable. The first is the imagination to see the relationship of one idea to another in new and vivid ways, even though the ideas be as old as creation. The second is a good voice, by which listening is made a joy rather than an ordeal. A third is a combination of courage and compassion that will give preaching a cutting edge where principles are involved, but which will manifest itself with a kindness that will evoke a positive rather than a negative response. The fourth is an aesthetic sense, a sensitivity to the beautiful in form and color and sound that will add dignity, order,

and impact to the service of worship. In the New Testament the minister was called "bishop" or "overseer." Richard Niebuhr defines this function as that of a "Pastor-Director." The proper performance of this administrative function includes a great many seemingly unrelated tasks, all of which have to do with getting people to do things together in the right way and at the right time. A new science in the field of production has arisen in recent years called "Industrial Engineering," which has to do with finding the right people and training them in the most efficient way to do a prescribed piece of work in the most economical manner. The minister is in many ways an "industrial engineer," with the important distinction that, whereas his business counterpart pays people wages for doing relatively simple and prescribed jobs, the minister must find people to do very important and complicated things without pay. Few people really understand the magnitude of this task.

Many have been the criticisms of the church in our generation for its lack of efficiency and for its failure to get results commensurate with its promises. But think for a time of the places you have been where there are church buildings. Think of the new buildings being erected every year all over the land. Think of the meetings and activities that go on in those buildings every day of the year. Think of the problems of inflation and other bugaboos that plague your family in these days. And then remember that every one of these church meetinghouses, school buildings, hospitals, settlement houses, and parish halls was built with hard earned dollars given by people who didn't have to contribute a cent; remember that all these activities that keep the lights burning late into many a night are carried on by people who are voluntarily giving up their leisure time; and then remember that somebody had not only to make the plans for all this labor, but also to persuade people to do it, and you will understand the magnitude of a minister's administrative responsibility.

The first and most immediate administrative task is that of the church school. A great deal could be said about the function of the minister as a teacher. Perhaps this should have been added as a fourth essential task of the ministry, making the job a square rather than a triangle. In early days in New England many churches had two ministers, one a pastor and the other a teacher. But we have preferred to treat this task as the first extracurricular function of the minister, since it is a fact that in some churches this function is carried on by laymen, whereas the other three here mentioned must inevitably fall upon the minister's shoulders. Nevertheless, there must be a church school and a program for the training of the young. This may be an administrative problem in that the minister must find and train among his

members people who can do it, or it may be an essential part of the preaching-pastoral ministry, as an activity not only initiated but also engaged in and supervised by the minister. In larger churches this educational function is often the full time task of an additional minister or other staff member.

The second administrative chore is the raising of the money by which the program of the church is financed and its missionary outreach is assured. Here, again, happy is the minister who has in his congregation a layman who will carry the lion's share of this burden. Often it is not so and, although there is usually a finance committee and a Board of Trustees whose responsibility this is, it is the minister who must see that they do their job.

Thirdly, the average church is a three ring circus, with dozens of activities, including women's societies, men's clubs, boy and girl scouts, young people's societies, and many more. It is the minister's responsibility through his cabinet to see that the needs for fellowship and service among his people are met by appropriate organizations and that these organizations "keep out of each other's hair" and maintain a proper relationship to the spiritual life of the church.

Fourthly, the minister must set up his own program, planning his days and weeks so that no essential task is left undone, and leading his church in long range plans that will give order and effectiveness to the life and labor of the fellowship.

The two most important attributes of the pastor-director are self-discipline and imagination.

The ability to discipline oneself, to be one's own boss, is sometimes a most difficult skill to acquire. The minister, particularly in one of the free churches, is about the most independent of all people, so far as hours of work are concerned. People don't like lazy ministers. They aren't enthusiastic about raising their salary. But a minister can be lazier without getting fired than almost any other man. If he comes up with a reasonably listenable sermon on Sunday, if he visits the sick and the lonely, and if the building doesn't fall down, he will probably draw his pay and keep his job. The jibe, "Pretty soft — a job where you have to work only one day a week!" is bitterly unfair to the great majority of ministers, whose work week is nearer sixty than forty hours. But there is enough truth in it, where some clerics are concerned, to keep it alive. Unless the minister can make himself go to work and pace himself so that he doesn't loaf or burn himself out the first year of his ministry, he had better find himself a wife who will drive him, or get a subordinate position where he will have a superior to tell him what to do.

Sometimes a man is born to be an administrator, but more often this particular skill is an acquired one. The artistic sensitivity and intellectual attributes that make for good preaching handicap many men in administration. It is by no means always laziness that results in a sloppy job of ecclesiastical engineering. It may be that the minister is so happy digging into his books to prepare a fine sermon or ringing doorbells to serve his people that the time for planning and promoting gets left out. But if he has the ability to discipline himself, to make himself do what he doesn't want to do, he can make himself an administrator. Actually, the more meticulous he is at administration, the more careful he is in making his plans, and the more he sticks to his avowed purpose to use his time effectively, the less time that part of his job will take and the more time he will have for the work he prefers.

To self-discipline must be added imagination, an essential piece of equipment for the minister's task. A man can be a work-horse who labors night and day and still be wasting his time, if he does not have the imagination to see things in their right order. The church whose program is thrilling to the community it serves is the church whose minister has his eyes open to new opportunities. The California church that is running a Sunday School in an open air theatre, the church in the blighted city area that promotes a nursery school for children of working mothers, the church near the military center that does things for the soldiers, the church in the farm belt that gets hot meals for migrant workers, the church that arranges a blood bank, the church whose good offices are used to help settle a labor-management crisis — these are the churches whose people know a high sense of mission. Often these ideas come from lay people rather than from the minister himself. However, unless the minister has imagination to see the possibilities that lie dormant in original suggestions, they are likely to die an untimely death.

It is a fortunate church that has a minister with the self-mastery to plan his work and then work his plan, and with imagination enough to see things that need doing in the name of Christ.

If there is one of the three essential functions of the minister that is most important, it is the third, that of pastor. In one sense the other two functions are only extensions of the pastoral. The minister preaches and administers in order to serve his people as their shepherd, and if this people-pastor relationship is not maintained, nourished, and extended every day, the minister is no true minister of Jesus Christ. When Peter assured the risen Christ after repeated questioning that he did truly love him, the commission he received was, "Feed my lambs!" This is the task that confronts the minister every day when he awakes, and it is with him when he goes to bed. There is a profound psychologi-

cal basis for the Roman Catholic custom of calling a priest "Father." Just as the parent is never free of concern for his child from the day it is born, so the good pastor is never loosed from his people.

To the ordinary person in the United States, people by and large are a happy lot. He sees his friends at work and play and, although he may notice that some family has more than its share of hardship, he usually thinks that such things are rare. He knows his own anxieties, but he doesn't talk about them to his friends. Rather, when they are together, they are more likely to talk about politics, or the weather, or something else of impersonal interest. When tragedy strikes a home, the usual reaction is to wonder, "Why should this happen to us, of all people?" Few realize at such a time how many of their closest friends have been in the same boat.

But this is not true of the pastor. He sees people in their times of pleasure, and is usually the one most welcome at the christening and the wedding. But the secret griefs of the family are his, too. He knows of the scars left by the death of a child, the disappointment when an expected promotion didn't come through at the office, the gnawing anxiety about a hidden and little known disease, the heroic but not always winning effort to make ends meet on a small income. The pastor is a member of two hundred to a thousand families, and the burdens and sorrows of them all are his also. The mission of Jesus was voluntarily to take upon himself the pains of our flesh and, by overcoming the world, to make God's power available to us. The pastor, weak as he is, must share this mission. To him people are always subjects, never objects. He stands beside them in comedy and in tragedy with one primary purpose, to be the channel of God's grace to them. This is too great a burden for any man to bear. That is why pastors whose own spiritual life is barren never truly succeed, and why those whose relationship to God is real and vital often succeed without other attributes sometimes regarded as essential.

Many a GI or Tommy who served in the Orient during World War II offered up a fervent prayer of thanks that Gordon Seagrave, the Burma Surgeon, trained many little brown Burmese girls to be wonderful nurses. The rule he gave them as the first principle of nursing was this: "In caring for a patient, you must learn to feel the pain as if it were your own and yet not flinch." This is the rule of the pastor. He has no right to insulate himself from the lives of his people, but he must not try to bear their burdens himself. He is one who takes the troubles of people and conveys them to God in the faith that the Father's grace is sufficient for his children's need. He must feel the pain as if it were his own and yet not break under it, because he knows there is One who is willing and able to bear it for him and for his parishioner.

This part of the minister's task is the most difficult and the most rewarding, but it is also the hardest to interpret to an outsider, especially to a young man who has yet to feel the heavy hand of tragedy upon his life. When the physician goes to the patient in pain and eases the pain and averts the danger, the joy of medical service is easily apparent. The function of the social worker who feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and gives shelter to those who have no home is easy to understand. The attorney who defends the innocent and prosecutes the guilty is an appealing figure with an attractive place in society. But what of the pastor? Sometimes he can heal, sometimes help, but more often, as was said earlier, "he is only concerned with what people believe." The telephone of a certain Doctor of Divinity is said to have been answered one day by his small son. An anxious voice inquired, "Is Dr. P. there? My child is sick and I must find a doctor." The youngster's reply is typical of much adult opinion of the ministry. "I'm sorry," he said, "but my Daddy isn't the kind of a doctor who does anybody any good."

But those who know what it means to have a good pastor when one is needed will testify otherwise. There are times when after the physician, the lawyer, the social worker, and the ordinary friend have done all they can, what they can do is not enough. Then to have a strong, good man to stand by as a friend and advocate in the court of the Most High can save a person from utter despair. Richard Cabot, the eminent Boston physician who was often as much a pastor as he was a doctor to his patients, was awakened by his telephone late one night. It was a former patient of his who was calling from his home in a far western city. "I have just one question I must ask you, Doctor. Do you believe in immortality?" "Yes, I do," replied Dr. Cabot. "Thanks very much," said the patient, and the click of the receiver ended the conversation. At that moment in his life that man had to know the conviction of his most trusted friend on a vital matter. Sometimes people fail to realize how important this can be until the time comes. Then the pastor is the most important man in the world.

The personal attributes essential for the fulfillment of this function of the ministry are emotional stability and a great love for people and for Jesus Christ.

Few young men start out with these attributes in sufficient supply, but usually they can be developed. Some will begin with a great love for people but no love for Christ. Frequently this is simply because the young man knows people but has never really gotten acquainted with Christ. He will shortly find that if he is to serve people he must know Christ better, and to know him is to love him.

Occasionally the reverse is true. The young man will have had a

deep and moving religious experience. He has a lot of vague ideas about preaching the gospel to every creature, but his primary concern is Christ and not the creatures. But if his love for Christ is sincere and deep, he will soon find out that the chief commandment of Christ to his followers is that they should love one another. So, if either love for people or love for Christ is present at the beginning, the other attributes can usually be cultivated.

Emotional balance and stability are sometimes difficult to achieve.

The chaplain of a great city hospital had just shown one of his friends through the long wards and corridors of his "parish." His friend was greatly depressed by the sights and sounds and smells and said to the chaplain, "I should think you'd go crazy here in the midst of all this pain and death." The chaplain replied, "Perhaps I should if I couldn't keep things in proper perspective. To be sure, there is much pain and death in this place, and a large part of my ministry is concerned with comforting those who suffer. But it is a fact that the great majority of those who come here leave in better condition than when they arrived. Although some suffer and die, more have their pain eased and return to life. And through it all there is the thrilling battle of life and faith against doubt and death, and often life and faith win even in death. No, far from making me despondent, my ministry here is full of joy in sharing the victories of heroic little people whose names never get in the papers but are written in the Book of Life."

This is the minister's job. He must be preacher, administrator, and pastor. It helps if he has imagination, self-discipline, an aesthetic sense, a love for people, and a love for Christ. It also helps if he has a good brain, a good voice, and a good wife. It is absolutely essential that he have some Christian convictions and the courage to go with them, although these last are much improved by the formal training provided by a seminary course and the practical training provided by a few battles fought and won.

When Jesus was seeking recruits he said, "The fields are ready for the harvest, but the laborers are few." Any farmer would understand these metaphors. There stands the grain, full grown and ready to be gathered in. The year's work is all ready to be turned into bread and cash. But unless it can be harvested it will spoil. It will not await the convenience of the harvester, but must be reaped when it is ripe.

Never was this figure of speech more apt than in present-day America. The old over-confidence of the roaring twenties is gone. The hardships and dangers and tragedies of twenty years of depression and war and uneasy peace have shown us that "man does not live by bread alone." More and more our people are willing to recognize that "all

we hold dear depends on what we believe." There is a hunger abroad for the Christian gospel as the only truly good news left in the world. And this hunger will not be appeased until more and better young men hear the call to the Christian ministry.

In Roman Catholic families it is regarded as a thing for which to thank God if one of the sons goes into the priesthood. A hundred and fifty years ago American families of Protestant persuasion were delighted when their sons accepted "the highest calling of all." Today, many Protestant families would rather have their sons become engineers or businessmen. There is nothing wrong with being an engineer or an accountant, but there is a great deal right that has been overlooked about being a minister. Theological seminaries are more crowded than they have been in decades, but the demand still far exceeds the supply. Ministers are needed to work with young people and to conduct specialized program in city and country. And ministers are needed to build and maintain churches physically and spiritually.

The USA is growing at the rate of 4,000,000 souls a year. It is estimated that half of America's children have no real religious instruction. Whole new communities are springing up on the fringes of our great cities without ready access to a church.

The churches of America are doing something about it. The major denominations are raising huge sums of money to build meetinghouses in new communities and rebuild and expand old ones. But it takes more than money to build churches. It takes men.

A young minister lives in a brand new house in a new city in California. All his neighbors live in new houses because five years ago there weren't any houses within miles. Down the street from his house, in the middle of this area into which hundreds of families are moving every month, there is a gap in the building development. This gap is now a prune orchard. All the young man has to do is turn that prune orchard into a church. And he will do it, too. Gathering children for church school and people for neighborhood meetings, raising money, getting materials, he will by God's help establish a church which will be the most important building and the most important organization in that community.

But there are other cities where buildings are going up, where money is appropriated to build meetinghouses, where there may be no young minister to do the job because there aren't enough good ones to go around.

"The fields are ready for the harvest." The time is ripe, not only on the fringes of the cities, but also in the open country and in the dirty downtown areas of metropolitan counties, for men who know

that all we hold dear depends on Christianity, who know that it's what you believe that counts, who feel sure that Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. The time is ripe for such men to make their lives count in a way more exciting and more productive of real good than any other way affords.

You're wanted — to bring in a harvest waiting to be reaped.

IV

"How can I tell whether I'm 'called' or not?"

The word "vocation" is derived from the Latin word *voco*, which means "I call!" Not only the ministry but other careers as well, are "vocations." Thus, whether the young man chooses to be a physician, a traveling salesman, a soldier, a carpenter, or something else, he selects a "vocation" or a "calling." To a Christian any honorable labor may be his calling, and it is obvious that not everybody is "called" to the ministry. The church and the ministry would be better off if some ministers had become plumbers instead!

In many ways the choice of a life work is much like the choice of a wife. It is a choice of tremendous importance; it must be made on the basis of incomplete evidence; it is fraught with the inevitable risk and great possibilities. And in both the marital choice and the vocational choice there must be an agreement of the head and the heart before success is assured. A marriage which begins solely on the basis of emotional attraction, without carefully laid plans, has a perilous foundation indeed, and the divorce courts are crowded with people who have just awakened to the fact that there is more to marriage than Hollywood tells us. Strangely enough, the converse of this is not true. Many marriages, begun on the basis of a carefully thought out set of reasons, become highly successful. In support of this it is interesting to note that there are more divorces per capita in the United States, where young people are allowed to pick their own mates, than in China, where the parents arrange the marriage and a man may see his bride for the first time on their wedding day. Let it be quickly said that (a) we heartily favor the American method of selection with all its shortcomings, and (b) unless a marriage of the head quickly develops into a marriage of the heart, it is not much better than no marriage at all. The fact is, however, that inasmuch as "a guy is a guy" and girls are also young women, the marriage of the head in most instances becomes one of the heart as well. When it doesn't, it is the most miserable of mistakes.

So it can be said of the marital choice that there is a heart element and a head element in it. When it is begun solely on the heart level, it often fails. When it is begun on the head level, it often succeeds, but only when the heart factor appears on the scene shortly after the wedding. Therefore the best marital choice is one upon which both the head and the heart agree, and it is desirable that they do so in advance.

The comments in the above paragraph could apply also to vocational choice — any vocational choice, the ministry included. There is

the heart factor in the vocational choice, which may take the form of a "heavenly vision" such as St. Paul's, or a "strangely warm" sensation such as John Wesley's, either of which results in an assurance that "this is the work for me." There is also the head factor, the facts of talent, desire, and need which we shall presently discuss. Often when the heart factor is supreme it is wrong. But the exceptions to this rule are on the order of apostles and prophets, saints and martyrs; so it ill behooves us to regard the calling of the heart with any contempt. Rather, it is wise for us to test it by reasonable inquiry, which will often serve to substantiate rather than refute its validity. On the other hand, when the appeal of the head seems to point in a direction where there is no emotional "charge," this does not mean that the calling is not valid. The calling of the heart or of the Holy Spirit does not come according to a definite schedule and may be waiting for an opportune moment. The program here indicated is to follow the leading of the head to a professional school and see if the heart does not then give its approval.

"How do I know I am 'called' to be a minister?" The answer to this question is that, to a Christian, any constructive career is a "calling." You know you are called to be a minister when your heart and your head agree that that is the job for you.

The heart factor will take care of itself if you find out all you can about the choices open to you. Just as some girls have no particular appeal to you and others have a great deal, you will find that some jobs interest you immediately, while others just "aren't your type." Your taste in girls and in jobs can change radically, however, so don't place too high a value on the first impression. The deciding factor in your choice is not something you "cook up"; it is something that happens to you, brought on by influences beyond your control. This is the purpose of God at work, for he made us all different, and when he made us, he put into us an elemental attraction, like the instinct of a homing pigeon, that draws us toward the job he has for us. Someday you will know of a given task that that task is yours, and that you can be satisfied with nothing else. When that time comes, you may have to take a second choice, and strangely enough, perhaps you will find that the second choice was really the one for which you were made. Phillips Brooks, the prince of the American pulpit, became a priest in the Episcopal Church only after another vocational door was closed to him. His second choice was God's first choice, but it became his first choice, too, after he had decided on it and seen how he and his job were made for each other. But the heart factor in your vocational choice isn't something you have to worry about. It will present itself someday, and then you will have to deal with it.

The head factor is something else again. It is your responsibility to seek out the answer to your big question as to what you are to do with your life. The first important consideration in this regard is for you to have a knowledge of the principal vocations open to a man of your talents. One of the reasons this pamphlet was written is that altogether too many young men make their choice of a vocation without ever knowing anything about the Christian ministry. Most public school vocational guidance departments are peculiarly blind at this point. Let the ministry have a fair presentation, along with engineering and business and the professions.

There are three questions you must ask yourself about every vocation you consider: (1) Would I like it? (2) Could I do it? and (3) Do people need it?

If the answer to these questions is "yes," then it is quite likely that the "head factor" in this choice points in its direction.

Although we must do some things we don't like to do in this life, and every vocation has in it some drudgery, it is virtually impossible for a person to be effective in a job he dislikes. If a man is overly introspective, hates the thought of meeting people, breaks out in a cold sweat every time he has to make a speech, and would far rather follow somebody than be a leader, it is unlikely that he would make a good minister. Like all rules, this one has exceptions, but if this description fits you, it would be well to count this as an argument against the ministry as your vocation.

When considering the ministry under the test, "Would I like it?" there are some common misconceptions. The first is that ministers are people who have to give up a great deal and never have any fun. If you know many parsons, you will discover that they have more fun than most other people. Old tabus have now disappeared from the majority of Protestant churches, but even where they still exist (or even where they don't), ministers usually have little time for bridge or theater parties, being occupied instead in far more interesting and thrilling human contacts in the course of their daily work. Another misconception is that ministers are doomed to a "genteel poverty" and must spend their declining years in dependence on charity or their children. Ministers, like school teachers, have risen in late years in the economic scale. In fact, with the rise in rents and building costs, the parsonage has become a valuable consideration, so that pastors as a rule are better off than the teachers who live in their parishes. Pension plans in force in almost all denominations guarantee that, although the minister will not get rich, neither will he starve, nor will his children lack, nor will his later years want for proper provision.

In general, if you like people, if you enjoy "running things," if you are interested in intellectual pursuits, if you have a passion to do things that are important, and if you can be satisfied with a job whose temporal rewards (though they never will be large) are dependent on how good a piece of work you can do, then the chances are good that, if you become a minister, you will like your work. The hours will be long and the demands heavy, but your job will be full of rich and unexpected rewards.

The question, "Could I do it?" is one of obvious importance. You might like to become the leading tenor in the Metropolitan Opera Company, but if you have chronic laryngitis, or a voice like that of Andy Devine, you had better restrict yourself to some more reachable ambition. To be sure, it is well to be certain that you can't do it before you give up a cherished hope. Glenn Cunningham took a pair of crippled legs and broke the world record in the mile run with them. Lou Brissie brought a useless leg back from the war and still was able to pitch for the Cleveland Indians. In the ministry, where the power of God is always at work, it is often possible to overcome many seemingly insuperable handicaps. In Chapter III we tried to outline the qualifications for the ministry. If you don't measure up, perhaps another vocation is the one for you. But perhaps not. This is an area in which aptitude tests are helpful, not as absolute determinants, but as indications of strength and weakness.

The third question, "Does the human race need it?" is the most important. The greatest basic need of the human spirit is to be needed, to be useful. A job that is highly paid but useless may look good to a young man, but as the years go by it becomes a "long job and short life." When we see how much money is spent to persuade people to buy one kind of soap or cigarettes instead of another, it staggers us. The share of our income and talents wasted in such activities is one of the serious drains on the resources of our time. The greatest sorrow of old age is, "Nobody wants me or needs me any more." If at the end of the road we can look back on a time when we were needed, if in our homes we are surrounded by tokens of people's gratitude for our service to them, this sorrow is lessened and often eliminated. Service is joy. This is not shallow idealism; it is sound psychology. And nobody is of more use to the human race than a good minister of Jesus Christ. We hope after reading the early chapters of this pamphlet you agree.

For the Christian the right question is not, "Am I called to the ministry?" with the implication that, if I conclude I am not, I just take my choice of any job and settle down in it. The right question is, "What is my vocation?" Whether God made me to be a clergyman or not, it is a fact that he made me for some useful service to humanity,

and I shall not truly be fulfilling my destiny until I find that task and lose myself in it.

As you seek your vocation you will test each one by the three questions we have raised: "Is it something I should like to do? Is it something I could learn how to do? Is it something that is worth the only life I have?" We shall find that many things will be ruled out on each test. If we are wise we shall give least weight to the first question. When we have made our study we shall find that there are several careers we might like and that we could learn to follow with greater or less success. Some of these will be jobs anybody could do and that may or may not make a difference to the lives of people. Some may be works of evil, whose net result would be a weight on our consciences. A few will be positions of service that will lift the weight of sorrow and pain from the minds and hearts of people and give happiness and hope and meaning to neighbors near and far. It is likely by this time that one of these will come to life and reach out to us and say,

"You're wanted — this job is for you."

CONCLUSION

These are the things I have tried to say.

All that we hold to be precious depends for its preservation on the movement instituted two thousand years ago by Jesus of Nazareth. Democracy, the monogamous family, the very dignity and significance of life itself, all these are branches out of Christian roots and cannot live apart from these roots. The really vital issues of our day will not be decided on the field of battle or in the clash of conflicting "isms," but will be fought out in the minds of men. The question on which the future depends is, "What will men believe?" If mankind believes what is right, nothing can destroy its hopes. If it believes what is wrong, no political or economic or military force will be great enough to avert disaster.

The basic belief on which all others rest is the belief in Jesus as a person. This was the first belief of the Apostles. It was there that they began; it is there that we too must begin. Other Christian doctrines, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Atonement, and the rest, do not come at the beginning, though they do come later. The important decision to begin with is the decision to accept Jesus as the way. If we follow Christ as the way, in time like Peter we shall discover him also as the truth. And then we shall know how to live the life.

The key man in this great undertaking upon which so much depends is the Christian minister, the second lieutenant in Christ's army, the local leader without whom the cause of Christ cannot prevail. As preacher, administrator, and pastor, he has a task to perform that is unique in its importance and in the opportunities it affords.

A call to any vocation is one of the heart and the head. The right vocation is the job we want to do, can do, and ought to do because of the service we can render in it to human need. For some that vocation is the Christian ministry. You have only one life to live and give, and

"Young man, you're wanted!"

